



CA DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION
STATE
SPECIAL SCHOOLS

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California School for the Blind

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Superintendent's message

By: Stuart Wittenstein

As **CSB** opens a new school year, there is always excitement about a fresh start and new hopes for our students. Enthusiasm and eagerness filled the days as staff trained and worked together in expectation of students returning and new students beginning their **CSB** experience.

As you will read in this issue, **CSB**'s staff spent much of staff development training in the critical area of emergency preparedness. Our primary duty is to assure the safety of our students and this preparation is essential. The culminating activity this fall was our participation in the statewide earthquake drill called The Great Shake Out. This was a terrific learning and fun experience for students and staff and we will continue to learn and grow from these experiences.

In addition, you will read articles which detail the unique opportunities which students have when they attend a special purpose school like **CSB**, including community education events for White Cane Day

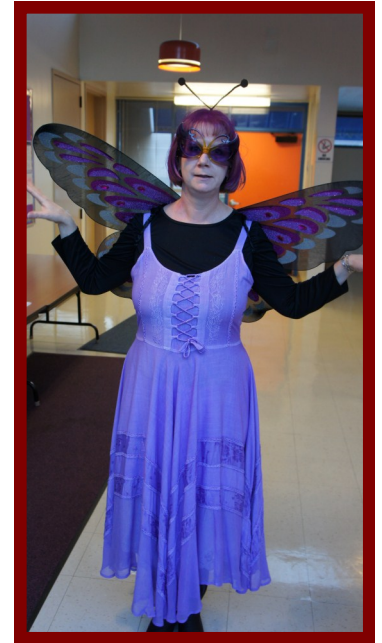
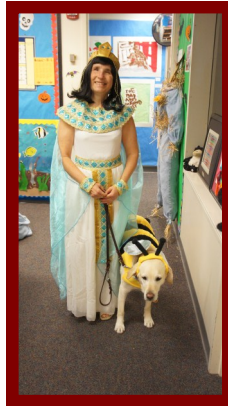
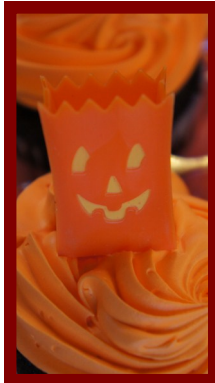


Our very own superintendent, Stuart Wittenstein, was presented the William H. English Leadership Award, by Jim Durst, superintendent of the Indiana School for the Blind and president of Council of Schools for the Blind, who also nominated Stuart.

awareness, cooking in the dorms and pie-making with the Lions, Halloween dances, contributing to food banks and animal shelters, and kayaking, hiking, and fitness training. We do our best to enrich our students' educational experience so that they are prepared to transition to new environments and be fully participating members of their communities. We strive to educate the whole child – the whole student – and provide a well-rounded education. Thanks to all of you who support these efforts with your advice and wise counsel .

Bake Sale and Costume Contest

The social committee sponsored a bake sale and a costume contest for staff. The bake sale was a huge hit with many staff bringing homemade ghastly treats to sell. There was also a costume contest with Annie Foyle winning first prize with her butterfly costume, and Ann Gelles' guide dog, Noelani, winning funniest/cutest costume. A good time was had by all.



Look Who's new!



Stephanie Herlich
Low Vision Specialist



Jen Oden
Psychologist



Travis McKinnon
Student Assistant

A.P.E. news

By: Mary Alice Ross

The Adapted Physical Education program has been in full swing since early September. There are many new students both in the Transition program and in the Education program.

Some of the students have shared with the staff that they have never played beep base ball or goal ball. Many have never experienced the equipment in the Fitness Center and kayaking in the pool is also new to them.

Spin bikes, elliptical, rowing machines, treadmills and weight lifting equipment are all available in the Fitness Center. The new students seem excited to workout with this equipment, and learn proper technique.

Currently, the Transition students are enjoying hiking at some of the local East Bay Regional parks. When the rain begins, we head to the bowling lanes. Several of the hikes are grueling and we refer to one of the more difficult hikes up a steep incline as “cardiac hill”. The students learn different outdoor education skills as well as different movement skills.

The younger students in the Education program are learning and improving their swim skills. In addition, they are enjoying sitting in a kayak in the pool, learning the forward, backward and spin strokes.

Kayaking is new to many students. It is a great way to learn basic strokes in the pool prior to going out on a lake.

All in all, the new students here at **CSB** have enjoyed learning new skills and brushing up on old ones.

All classes work on California Physical Education content standards appropriate for their age and grade level.



Teaching Assistant Connie Wright, helps Yasmin S-L. play paddleball.

Remembering 9/11

By: Stuart Wittenstein

-Email message sent to staff

On the 10th Anniversary of September 11, 2001, as I drove to work, the airwaves were full of special reports about this anniversary. All of this attention to that terrible day has reminded me of how proud I was (and still am) of the way this school and our staff responded to those events and their aftermath. While schools in our area closed, and the Bay Area bridges and airports shut down, and the nation prepared for more attacks and the potential for full blown warfare within our borders, we all came to work and kept our students safe and secure and as calm as possible.

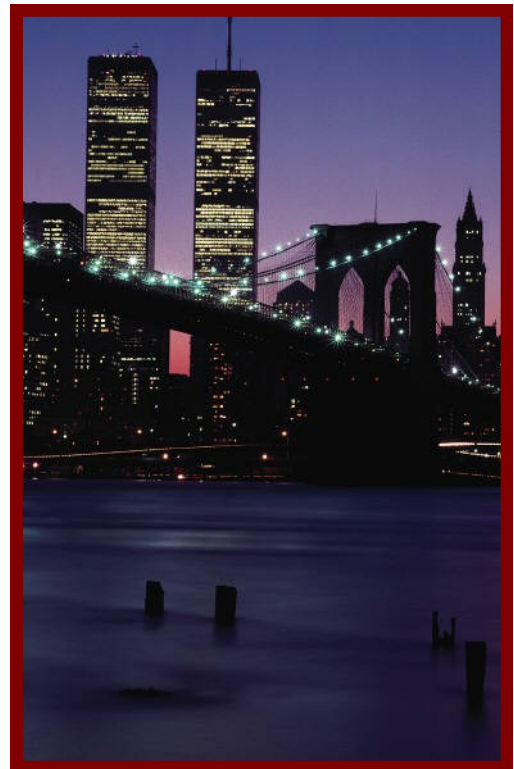
I remember wondering if residential staff members would be able to make it to work on that Tuesday afternoon with all the security measures in place, with their own children home from school and frightened -- and was extremely gratified that somehow 100% of our staff arrived on time to take care of the needs of our students. Your level of dedication is remarkable.

Looking out the window of my office, I see the crepe myrtle we planted on the first anniversary of September 11th. It is beautifully in full bloom as we thought it might be each year at this time. It serves to remind me that as U.S. citizens looked for ways to help after those attacks, **CSB's** staff realized that we had a way to help – and that was to continue our important work and be there for our students and for each other.

In my 39th year of working in schools, I have never been more proud to be a member of any school staff than I am of this one.

Thanks for all you do for our students and our community,

Stuart



The students in Ms. Tanaka's class would like to thank everyone for their generous donations during the past holiday seasons to people and animals in need.

The Tri-City Food Bank and Animal Shelter also appreciate the donated items.

This year our class plans to continue this tradition!

Remember, **Sharing is Caring!**



Thank You,
Theodora, DJ, Victor, Luis, Marissa and Angelica

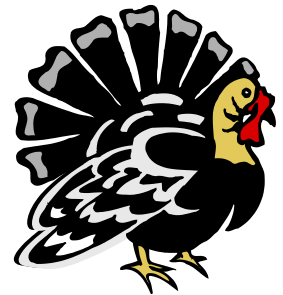


Important Dates to Remember!

NOVEMBER

11 - Veterans Day Holiday - SCHOOL IN SESSION

21 - 25 - Thanksgiving Break - NO SCHOOL



DECEMBER

23 - Winter Break begins



JANUARY

9 - Classes resume

16 - Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday—No School



White Cane Day at CSB

By: Katie Smith

On October 6, 1964, a joint resolution of the Congress, HR 753, was signed into law authorizing the President of the United States, President Lyndon B. Johnson, to proclaim October 15 of each year as "White Cane Safety Day." (Maurer, M., <http://www.nfb.org>). Each year the **C**alifornia **S**chool for the **B**lind (**CSB**) celebrates White Cane Day by participating in various on campus and outreach activities. This year we celebrated campus wide by offering hands-on cane repair opportunities and participating in community outreach in Fremont and Sacramento. On Monday, October 17th, select teachers, administrators, and students set up information stands in Fremont at the Main Public Library and Ohlone Community College and in Sacramento at the California Department of Education (CDE). Teachers and students handed out flyers about White Cane Day, demonstrated how to use the white cane, the BrailleNote and Sendero GPS, and some lucky participants had the chance to go under blindfold and use the cane to go through an obstacle course! The braille station is always popular as visitors leave with a souvenir! (Their name written in braille.) **CSB** student artwork was showcased and informational displays explained Orientation and Mobility, the Gilly Club (Gilly is our school wide change of career dog. Led by Marcia Vickroy, Cheryl Besden, and Gary Shrieves, students have exposure to and learn about caring for a real dog, Gilly. The responsibilities of being a guide dog owner are also discussed.), and the **CSB** Assessment Program. I want to acknowledge and specifically thank the following students, O&M instructors, and administrators for their involvement: Alma G., Marissa G., DJ H., Joseph L., Cody M. and Champagne, Navjot P. Andres A., Victor S., Noralys C., Angelica V., Amara A., Kevin C., Jazmine R., Travis N., Robert L., Eric R., Sharon Sacks, Annie Foyle, Kristi Barrella, Cheryl Besden, Jim Blackshear, Nita Crow, Gary Shrieves, Katie Smith, and Marcia Vickroy. The **CSB** community is proud of how well you represented our school and brought positive outcomes to the experience! Each day is an opportunity to educate the public about our special field of expertise!



Welcome CSBEF!!

By: Sharon Sacks

We are pleased to announce that the **C**alifornia **S**chool for the **B**lind Education Foundation has been recognized by the IRS as a charitable organization, and we have received a Tax I.D. Number. We are in the final stages of organization and will begin fund raising efforts for our school. Look for an inaugural letter asking for your support. The Foundation is looking for interested and active board members. We also want creative and innovative fund development ideas.

Get involved and help make CSBEF a HUGE SUCCESS!!!



PFA News!!

By: Staci Gonzales

The **C**alifornia **S**chool for the **B**lind Parents and Friends Association cordially invites everyone to a holiday mixer to be held in the Recreation Center on campus. The mixer will take place prior to the evening winter concert on December 15th at 6:00 pm until 7:00 pm. Come and enjoy light refreshments, find out what PFA has funded during the school year and what the plans are for the future. All are welcome!

CSB makes a difference

By: Annie Foyle

On September 20th **CSB** had another opportunity to host a UCSF Blood Drive. All donations from this drive went to help a young man, newly diagnosed and receiving treatment from UCSF. Our theme was Looney Tunes, complete with various vintage decorations and cartoons playing throughout the morning. We had a total of 22 donors, including 6 students (several who were first time donors). The beautiful part is these students came as a result of their own desire to be helpful to others. Many are already looking forward to our next drive. What an easy way to give, make a difference, and show kindness to a stranger. Please mark your calendars for April 20, 2012, and come join us for our next drive.



Annie dressed up as Bugs Bunny
"What's up Annie?"



CSB Staff undergo Fire Safety Training

By: Sharon Bobbitt

CSB Staff were trained in Fire Safety as well as Personal Emergency Preparedness. All staff members were able to personally extinguish a fire that was started by Victor Valdes, a retired Deputy Chief of the Fremont Fire Department. This training included Safety Procedures, types of fires, types of fire extinguishers, and how to use a fire extinguisher.

Pictured is Jamie Rizzo, Supervisor of the Residential Program at the **C**alifornia **S**chool for the **B**lind. She is practicing the PASS procedure for putting out fires. Pass stands for:

- ⇒ Pull the pin
- ⇒ Aim at the base of the fire
- ⇒ Squeeze the handle
- ⇒ Sweep back and forth

All staff participated and some commented they are now confident in using a fire extinguisher. Some staff have never used a fire extinguisher prior to this training and left the training feeling very proud. They now know they can use a fire extinguisher if a situation necessitates.



Retired Deputy Chief, Victor Valdes says; "All families should practice **"EDITH"**.

Exit Drills In The Home

- ⇒ Crawl low to avoid smoke
- ⇒ Exit the door or window
- ⇒ Meet Outside at your designated point

EDITH Drills should be practiced at home several times a year. At CSB we practice every month at different times of day.

Did you know there is a new Bill that has passed the Senate and is now in place?
Carbon monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act of 2010. This bill requires residential dwellings to have a carbon monoxide Poisoning Alert system installed in your dwelling. For more information go to the website below.

New Bill Passed: Senate Bill No. 183

Carbon monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act of 2010

ftp://leginfo.public.ca.gov/pub/09-10/bill/sen/sb_0151-0200/sb_183_bill_20100507_chaptered.pdf

A Particular Dog in Norway: A Poem

By: Alysa Chadow

I can't help but wonder
If a particular dog in Norway remembers me
In just the way that I remember him.
He was the black Standard Poodle
With a troll-shaggy coat,
Who waited in the middle of the road
for my dog and me to approach,
His hairy gaze and equally hairy body
A mixture of friendliness, and comedy
Under the water-logged coastal sky.
He was a pet, and unaware
Of my companion's service attire as sniffs were exchanged and a
waltz was done,
She backing in the lead, and he following.
Dogs have their own dances,
The mystery of which must be respected by others.



Other things were seen after that,
Other places were taken in, and sometimes
The sky was sodden; Sometimes it was not.
What I once saw physically
Is now a mental vision, and nothing more.
But even now, with all the months between us
If a particular dog in Norway dreams
And twitches in his sleep as my dog does,
And if so, if he dreams of that afternoon dance, with laughing
humans for an audience.

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Cooking in the Dorms

By: Patrick Weseman

In the last year, the students in Northridge Dorm at the California School for the Blind have embarked on a cooking program. The students are involved in every phase in the process from the planning of the meal, to the shopping, to the prep and finally the cooking of the meal.

"I like making my own food," said Arthur C.

The students have cooked everything from appetizers and salads to entrées and desserts. The highlights are the mouth-watering deserts that students have made. Everything from simple cookies and brownies from the box to homemade pies (with homemade crusts) to the county fair staple-cotton candy. They have even made up their own recipes including the one for lemon steak that won a residential cook-off.

The students plan the cooking activity and then go out to local stores and purchase the items needed for the activity. They use their own money to facilitate the project which teaches them about money management and purchasing, they also create their own shopping lists.

"When I am shopping, I am thinking about what I want to cook," said Nicholas P.

"And how much it costs."

The program also introduces the students to new foods that they have never had before and they are willing to experiment with different spices and new flavors. This opens up all new tastes and new worlds for the students.

"It is good to cook new foods and experiment," says Amy B.

The students learn real life skills such as measuring, pouring, cutting, chopping and stirring.

"It teaches me to be independent and gives me hands-on experience," said Ashley S.

Also, they like working with the stoves and ovens. The staff supervises the students as they are setting the ovens and stoves to the right temperature.

"I like working with an oven and a stove, it beats using the microwave," said Travis E.

One of the big things is that students share their culinary treats with other students and staff in social situations.

"I like eating it," says Nathan L-Y after enjoying some dorm cooking.

So, the next time you are up by Northridge, bring something to drink and hopefully there are some leftovers of the student cooking in the fridge that the dorm will be willing to share.



Halloween Dance

By: Staci Gonzales

October 26 was the day to boogie on down to the **CSB** Theater. The **CSB** student council sponsored a dance for all **CSB** students. Students and staff wore costumes. A menacing Freddy Krueger took to the dance floor, as well as, a royal Cleopatra, a sporty SF Giant, two lovely Greek goddesses, and more. A cash prize was awarded to the student with the best costume, which happened to be a delightful princess. A staff member also won a Starbucks gift card for being resourceful and creative with her “Eco-green Queen” attire. The dancers replenished their energy spent dancing with, nachos, fresh veggies, cookies, juice packs and water. A glittery backdrop of a skeleton wearing a top hat (drawn by two staff members) provided a fun photo opportunity for everyone. A frightfully good time was had by all.



Lion's Pie Making Event

By: LaWanda Vann

Pie making with the lions club was a huge success.

On October 19th Chef Frank Zerafa from Washington State along with 5 chefs from various locations arrived at the residential program to make pies with our students.

They didn't come empty handed. They brought dough, pie fillings, flour and even homemade rolling pins for each student to take home.

With the assistance of the Counselors and volunteers from the Lions Club, each chef was able to give individual attention to each student as they made their pies. They were able to choose from three fillings, apple, cherry and peach. Some chose to mix two fillings.

The students rolled dough with their personal rolling pins, filled the pan with the filling of their choice and even made a top layer. They also learned how to make slits on top of the pie using their fingers and a knife.

Rave reviews from the majority of the students included: "awesome", "I loved it", "I enjoyed the art of making pie"

Of course in all fairness, as with all cooking projects, there were two critics. Who said: "I don't want to do that again" and "It was fun and I don't want to do it again"

I believe this statement captured the feelings of the day.

"When you make pies it's serious, but have an awesome time, that's what the chefs taught us"

The Lions Club has an open invitation to return whenever they want. The students are waiting with their own menu requests.



If you would like to contribute a future article for Braille Bites, please send it to: jrudder@csb-cde.ca.gov